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*Template Effective 2-13-2017*



21 February 2018

**(U) 90th Annual Academy Awards  
Los Angeles, California  
FBI Los Angeles Field Office**

**(U) Scope Note**

(U//FOUO) This Special Event Threat Assessment (SETA) addresses threats to the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Academy Awards, taking place at the Dolby Theater, located at 6801 Hollywood Boulevard, Hollywood, California, on 4 March 2018. This FBI, Joint Regional Intelligence Center (JRJC), Hollywood Division of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD), Los Angeles Fire Department – Joint Hazardous Assessment Team (LAFD-JHAT), and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACoDPH) SETA does not include non-violent civil disobedience tactics (for example, protests without a permit), which are outside the scope of federal law enforcement jurisdiction.

(U//FOUO) FBI Los Angeles, JRJC, LAPD, LAFD, LAFD-JHAT, and LACoDPH have prepared the following SETA for the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Academy Awards to assist security planners and law enforcement personnel in monitoring threat information and maintaining a safe and secure event environment. Information in this assessment is current and accurate as of 19 February 2018.

**(U) Key Findings**

(U//FOUO) As of 19 February 2018, FBI Los Angeles, JRJC, LAPD, LAFD, LAFD-JHAT, and LACoDPH have no information to indicate a specific, credible threat to or associated with the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Academy Awards being held at the Dolby Theater in Hollywood, California.

(U//FOUO) Although there is no specific, credible information indicating a threat against the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Academy Awards from domestic extremists,<sup>a</sup> international terrorists, or homegrown

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<sup>a</sup> (U//FOUO) The FBI and DHS define domestic extremists as individuals based and operating entirely within the United States or its territories without direction or inspiration from a foreign terrorist group or other foreign power, who seek to further political or social goals, wholly or in part, through unlawful acts of force or violence. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics may not constitute extremism, and may be constitutionally protected.

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violent extremists (HVEs),<sup>b</sup> we remain concerned that terrorist groups and HVEs may seek to target mass gatherings. Al-Qa'ida, the Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham<sup>c</sup> (ISIS), and their affiliates remain intent on attacking Western targets and continue to call on individuals to conduct independent attacks in the United States using a range of tactics, including improvised explosive devices or incendiary devices, vehicle ramming, small arms, and edged weapons. Terrorist attacks in Western Europe, which resulted in significant casualties, have primarily focused on soft targets, such as sporting events, music venues, shopping and entertainment districts, and mass-transportation systems, although a March 2017 attack at the UK Parliament building shows that terrorists will attack locations with hardened security as well. The 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Academy Awards is a potentially attractive target due to the high concentration of attendees and the significant media attention the event will receive.

- (U) A suicide bomber detonated an explosive device concealed in a backpack in the foyer connecting the Manchester Arena and Victoria train station in Manchester, United Kingdom, at the end of a concert held on 22 May 2017, killing 22 and injuring at least 250 others, according to UK press reporting citing Manchester police.

(U//FOUO) Unaffiliated lone offenders<sup>d</sup> and HVEs are of primary concern due to their ability to remain undetected until operational; their willingness to attack civilians and soft targets; their ability to inflict significant casualties with weapons, which do not require specialized knowledge, access, or training; and their unpredictability, as witnessed in Orlando, Florida, San Bernardino, California, and recently New York City, New York.

(U//FOUO) The use of vehicle ramming alone or in conjunction with other tactics has become a recurring tactic employed by threat actors in the West, most recently on 31 October 2017 in New York City. This demonstrates a continued interest by HVEs in targeting crowded pedestrian areas. Although the area surrounding the Dolby Theater entryway will be secured with barriers, anyone wishing to cause harm to the public could do so outside the restricted zone.

- (U) On 31 October 2017, a US-based ISIS-inspired individual drove a rental truck through a pedestrian walkway and bicycle path in New York, killing 8 and injuring 12, according to the criminal complaint filed in the case and open source news

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<sup>b</sup> (U//FOUO) The FBI and DHS define an HVE as a person of any citizenship who has lived or operated primarily in the United States or its territories who advocates, is engaged in, or is preparing to engage in ideologically motivated terrorist activities (including providing support to terrorism) in furtherance of political or social objectives promoted by a foreign terrorist organization, but whose actions are independent of direction by a foreign terrorist organization. HVEs are distinct from traditional domestic terrorists who engage in unlawful acts of violence to intimidate civilian populations or attempt to influence domestic policy without direction from or influence from a foreign actor.

<sup>c</sup> (U) *Ash-Sham* is the historic Arabic name for Greater Syria.

<sup>d</sup> (U//FOUO) The FBI and DHS define a lone offender as an individual motivated by one or more violent extremist ideologies who, operating alone supports or engages in acts of violence in furtherance of that ideology or ideologies that may involve influence from a larger terrorist organization or a foreign actor.

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reporting citing law enforcement officials. Police arrested the suspect and found a note pledging allegiance to ISIS near the truck.

- (U) On 30 September 2017, an ISIS-inspired individual drove his vehicle into a traffic checkpoint near Commonwealth Stadium in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, during a Canadian Football League game, striking a police officer and that officer's vehicle. The attacker then proceeded to stab the police officer repeatedly and later struck pedestrians with a rental truck after fleeing a separate police checkpoint, according to open source news reporting citing law enforcement officials. Police arrested the suspect and found an ISIS flag in his car.

**(U) Event Overview**

(U) The 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Academy Awards, popularly known as "the Oscars," will be held on Sunday, 4 March 2018, at the Dolby Theater, which has a seating capacity of 3,400.

(U) The 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Academy Awards pre-show on the red carpet will start at 1530 (PST). The main event will begin at 1700 hours (PST) and ABC will broadcast the ceremony live to more than 225 countries worldwide.

(U) The 90th Annual Academy Awards, produced by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, is an event featuring the presentation of awards given annually for excellence of cinematic achievements. This event will draw many celebrities and high-profile individuals, as well as hundreds of fans. As a result, this event could be an attractive target for a terrorist act.

**(U) SEAR Level**

(U//FOUO) The 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Academy Awards are designated a SEAR V event.<sup>e</sup>

**(U) Potential Threat Indicators**

(U//FOUO) Absent a specific, actionable threat to the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Academy Awards, we are providing indicators to aid law enforcement and first responders in identifying and mitigating threats. The totality of behavioral indicators and other relevant circumstances should be evaluated when considering any law enforcement response or action. (Note: behaviors associated with the below indicators can include constitutionally protected activities. The FBI does not initiate any investigative activity based solely on the exercise of First Amendment activities or

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<sup>e</sup> (U//FOUO) SEAR V events are domestic events of local or state importance that generally require only state, local, or tribal resources. Federal departments and agencies should receive notice of these events for situational awareness, but in most cases, no federal assets or resources should be expended to assist with management of these events.

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on the race, ethnicity, national origin, or religion of the subject, or a combination of only such factors.)

(U//FOUO) Possible indicators of pre-operational surveillance or attack planning include:

- (U//FOUO) Theft of police and first responder uniforms and equipment.
- (U//FOUO) Unusual or prolonged interest in or attempts to gain sensitive information about security measures of personnel, entry points, peak days and hours of operation, and access controls such as alarms or locks.
- (U//FOUO) Observation of security reaction drills or procedures, or multiple false alarms or fictitious emergency calls to same locations or similar venues.
- (U//FOUO) Discreet use of cameras or video recorders, sketching, or notetaking consistent with pre-operational surveillance.
- (U//FOUO) Interest in speaking with building maintenance personnel.
- (U//FOUO) Observation of or questions about facility security measures, including barriers, restricted areas, cameras, and intrusion detection systems.
- (U//FOUO) Observations of or questions about facility air conditioning, heating, and ventilation systems.
- (U//FOUO) Suspicious purchases of dual-use items which could be used to construct an explosive device, including hydrogen peroxide, acetone, gasoline, propane, or fertilizer.
- (U//FOUO) Suspicious activities in storage facilities or other areas, which nefarious actors could use to construct an explosive device.
- (U//FOUO) Attempted or unauthorized access to rooftops or other potentially sensitive areas.
- (U//FOUO) Observation of individuals leaving unattended bags, luggage, or suspicious equipment at the site.
- (U//FOUO) Purchase, rental, or theft of large or heavy-duty vehicles or equipment, such as SUVs, trucks, or commercial motor vehicles, especially if accompanied by other indicators, such as undue nervousness during purchases, cash payments, multiple licenses, or lack of appropriate licenses or class endorsements.

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- (U//FOUO) Observation of an overloaded vehicle or fluid leaking from a vehicle, other than the engine or gas tank, or a possible strong odor coming from a vehicle.

(U//FOUO) Please report suspicious activities associated with any of the indicators listed above to the contact information at the end of this document.

**(U) Report Suspicious Activity**

(U) The FBI encourages recipients of this document to report information concerning suspicious or criminal activity to the local FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF). The FBI's Los Angeles Field Office can be reached at 1-310-477-6565.

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